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PRESS RELEASE

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Two District Department of the Environment Officials Arrested, Accused of Demanding Bribes in Exchange For Covering Up Asbestos Contamination - Arrests Followed Investigation by FBI, D.C. Inspector General's Office -

WASHINGTON - Joe L. Parrish, 51, and Gregory A. Scott, 59, both Inspectors at the District of Columbia Department of the Environment (DDOE), Air Quality Division, were arrested yesterday by agents from the FBI and the D.C. Inspector General's Office and charged in a criminal complaint with demanding and receiving \$5,000 in cash as a bribe for not reporting serious environmental infractions and assessing fines and penalties.

The arrests were announced today by U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr., James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, and Charles J. Willoughby, Inspector General for the District of Columbia.

Parrish, of Windsor Mill, Maryland, and Scott, of Temple Hills, Maryland, were charged with receipt of a bribe by a public official. If convicted of the charge, they face up to 15 years in prison. They appeared this afternoon in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

The arrests followed an investigation by the FBI's Washington Field Office and the D.C. Inspector General's Office. In court today, prosecutors said the men accepted an additional \$15,000 immediately preceding their arrests yesterday, for a total of \$20,000 in payments.

"Yesterday's events demonstrate how closely law enforcement is working together to root out corruption in our city," said U.S. Attorney Machen. "We will remain vigilant in our efforts to detect and disrupt public corruption schemes in the District of Columbia."

"Corruption erodes the public's confidence in our institutions and we take these matters seriously," said Assistant Director McJunkin. "Fighting public corruption remains one of the FBI's top priorities and the men and women of the Washington Field Office work every day to

investigate and bring to justice those who choose illegal gain over public service.”

According to the affidavit filed in support of the Complaint, as DDOE inspectors, Parrish’s and Scott’s primary duties and responsibilities included inspecting, monitoring and investigating air quality complaints, and preparing and submitting reports to DDOE attorneys to take action against the violators, including the assessment and collection of fines. They also were responsible for ensuring that contractors who were removing asbestos did so in a manner that protected the health and safety of the asbestos workers, building occupants and general public, and that all work was done in accordance with D.C. regulations and the federal Clean Air Act.

On the afternoon of August 23, 2011, at approximately 2 p.m. – just minutes after the earthquake hit the Mid-Atlantic area – Inspectors Parrish and Scott met with a cooperating witness at an apartment building on P Street in Southwest Washington that was undergoing major renovations and demanded cash payments in return for not reporting to the DDOE various environmental infractions that had been uncovered.

Specifically, during the meeting with the cooperating witness, Inspectors Parrish and Scott detailed the infractions that had been uncovered at the building, and the amount of potential fines associated with them. The inspectors then explained that based on their calculations, the fines owed by the management company of the building and the general contractor who were performing renovation work were at least \$20,000 per day, multiplied by 18 days.

Inspectors Parrish and Scott further explained that they had already prepared a report and taken photographs and that they were obligated to submit the materials concerning the serious environmental infractions to the attorneys at the DDOE so they could institute proceedings against the management company and general contractor to collect hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines.

Finally, Parrish and Scott stated that the violations, which purportedly included the illegal dumping and transportation of hazardous materials (asbestos), were also violations of the federal criminal environmental laws, and punishable by jail sentences.

Inspectors Parrish and Scott advised the cooperating witness that they were willing to “help” the management company, but they needed to be “compensated” for their efforts. They also stated that they had already prepared their written report, but were willing to “burn” it and not inform the DDOE of the infractions. The cooperating witness then paid a bribe of \$2,500 cash each to Inspectors Parrish and Scott, who agreed that they would not file their written report, and other evidence of infractions with the DDOE.

Charges contained in criminal complaints are merely allegations that a defendant has committed a violation of criminal laws and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.